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HARIJAN

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Editor : PYARELAL

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GANDHIJI'S ADDRESS TO SIKHS ON GURU NANAK'S BIRTHDAY

RULES OF SOCIAL CONDUCT

I fear that I might not be able to say all that I want to. I had also hoped that you having gone through the military machine would observe perfect silence. But the discipline has not reached the sisters and, therefore, they are not able to observe the laws of public meetings. I had the same experience when, some years ago, I was in Amritsar. You will admit that the fault lies with the men. As I entered th meeting place I saw the remains of bananas and oranges thrown about anyhow. These have not only made the place dirty, but dangerous to wall . We should learn to keep the roads and footpaths as clean as the floors in our houses. In the absence of proper receptacles I have noticed disciplined people putting these in a piece of paper and then temporarily in their pockets until they are cast in their places. It is the duty of men, if they have learnt the rules of social conduct, to teach them to the women-folk.

MOTHER'S BITTER PILL

Today Bawa Bachittar Singh came to me in the morning and insisted that I should attend the Guru Nanak's birthday celebration. He told me that probably over a lac of men and women had assembled there, and that most of them would be sufferers from West Pakistan. I hesitated because I felt that many Sikhs had been displeased with me. Bawa Saheb nevertheless insisted and said that I would say my say before the meeting. I yielded and felt that even as a mother often gives bitter pills to her children, I would take the liberty of saying things, which might appear to be bitter. In reality and in effect they are meant for your good. My mother often used to administer bitter drugs, but I could not feel elsewhere the comfort that her lap provided for me. Whatever I have said to you up to now, I do not regret. I have said those things as your sincere friend and servant. I have with me Sardar Datar Singh's daughter. You perhaps know him. He has lost his all in East Punjab. He was the owner of large tracts of land and several hundred fine cattle. He has lost many relatives and dear friends in Montgomery, but I am glad to be able to tell you that he has not shed a single tear over the misfortune nor has he felt any bitterness towards the Muslims. I would like you to follow his example. Sikh friends have told me that one Sikh is considered equal to 1,25,000 men. Where is that bravery today? Have things come to such a pass that a minority of Muslims cannot live in your midst with perfect safety?

I am free to admit that the mischief commenced in Pakistan, but the Hindus and the Muslims of East Punjab and the neighbouring districts have not been behindhand in copying the mischief. The difference is that the Hindus have not the courage of the Sikhs, who know how to use the sword.

THE SHER-E-KASHMIR

You see Sheikh Abdulla Saheb with me. I was disinclined to bring him with me, for, I know there is a great gulf between the Hindus and the Sikhs on the one side and the Muslims on the other. But Sheikh Saheb, known as the Lion of Kashmir, although a *pucca* Muslim has won the hearts of both by making them forget that there is any difference between the three. He had not been embittered. Even though in Jammu recently the Muslims were killed by the Hindus and the Sikhs, he went to Jammu and invited the evil-doers to forget the past and repent over the evil they had done. The Hindus and the Sikhs of Jammu listened to him. Now the Muslims and the Hindus and the Sikhs of Kashmir and Jammu are fighting together to defend the beautiful valley of Kashmir. I am glad, therefore, that you are receiving the two of us with cordiality.

BEGIN A NEW CHAPTER

Let this auspicious day mark the beginning of a new chapter in your life. Let the disgrace of driving out the Muslims from Delhi cease from today. I found to my shame that as our motor-car was passing through Chandani Chowk, which used to be filled with the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims, I did not notice a single Muslim passer-by. Surely we have not come to such a pass as to be afraid of the minority of the Muslims scattered throughout the Indian Union. If there are any traitors in their midst, our Government is strong enough to deal with them. We must be ashamed of hurting children, women or old men. Every man must be considered innocent before he is found guilty by a properly constituted court of law.

I fervently hope that such misdeeds will become now a thing of the past. The *kirpan* is a symbol of sanctity to be exhibited and spent in defence of the helpless and the innocent. The tenth and the last *guru* undoubtedly wielded the sword, but never, so far as I know, at the expense of the weak. He had imposed many restraints upon himself. He had many reputed Muslim disciples. So had the other *gurus* beginning with Nanak Saheb. Your bravery will be testified when all those who belong to different faiths including Muslims become your sincere friends.

Intoxicating drinks, drugs, dancing, debauchery and the vices to which many of us become addicted are not for the followers of the *gurus* and the *Granth Saheb*. With the *Granth Saheb* as my witness, I ask you to make the resolution that you will keep your hearts clean and you will find that all other communities will follow you.

ALL INDIA LEPROSY WORKERS CONFERENCE

The Conference of All India Leprosy Workers met at Wardha at the end of October. Inclusion of leprosy relief work in the nation's constructive programme by Gandhiji has of late focussed everybody's attention on the subject. Prof. T. N. Jagadisan, who is an ex-patient himself and an enthusiastic worker in the field, had suggested an All India Leprosy Workers Conference last year. The matter was placed before the Advisory Medical Board of the Kasturba Trust in March this year. Dr. Gilder who is a member of the Board welcomed the idea. Just at that time Sind had proposed a bill for compulsory sterilization of leprosy patients and there was much discussion on the subject. Dr. Gilder said that such a conference would be able to give some guidance to the Public Health authorities also. In May, at a joint meeting of the Kasturba Trust provincial agents and the Advisory Medical Board, it was decided that the Maharogi Sevamandal should call the Conference at Wardha. It was hoped that Gandhiji would be able to attend it, but the events in the country prevented him from doing so. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, the Health Minister at the Centre, also could not leave Delhi and it was feared that Dr. Jivraj Mehta, the Chairman of the Advisory Medical Board, who had become the Director-General of the Health Services, would also not be able to attend. It was suggested that the Conference be postponed. But the dates had been fixed and the response from leprosy workers all over the country had been so good that it was not considered right to postpone it and damp their enthusiasm. Ultimately Dr. Jivraj Mehta did make time to attend the Conference for two days and Dr. Gilder came for one day. There were about a hundred delegates who fell into four main groups:

1. Those who had been patients themselves.
2. Medical men and women engaged in leprosy work.
3. Lay workers mainly engaged in activities connected with the constructive programme.
4. Administrative authorities representing the Central and Provincial Governments.

Welcoming the delegates on behalf of the Maharogi Sevamandal, Shri Jajuji, the President of the Mandal said that though in India the incidence of leprosy was very high and was still on the increase, people were not awakened to the need of taking proper precautions and even the Government had done very little to tackle the problem. Addressing the workers he said, "Instead of saying, 'I heartily welcome you', I like to say, 'I humbly bow to you'." It was due to their tireless efforts and researches that in the place of frustration, today there was hope for the patient and reason for the public to shed fear.

Shri Jajuji also explained how in the course of the village uplift work, the constructive workers had come across the ravages of leprosy in the villages and the result was the establishment of the Maharogi Sevamandal. In fact, it was this experience that had induced Gandhiji to include leprosy work in the constructive programme.

Giving a report of the work of the Maharogi Sevamandal later, Shri Manohar Diwan said, "As Gandhiji has said this is a mission of compassion and service. They may be rid of the malady or not, they can dedicate themselves to the service of their own brethren. Leprosy work is not merely medical relief. It is transforming the frustration in life into joy of dedication and personal ambition into selfless service of others. If you can transform the life of a patient or change his values of life, you can change the village and the country. Therefore, this is included in the constructive programme."

Declaring the Conference open, Shri Thakkar Bapa paid glowing tributes to the Mission for Lepers who had been serving the leprosy-stricken all the world over for the last seventyfive years. He had followed their annual reports for the last twenty years with love and admiration waiting for the day when the work would be taken up by the Indians themselves. He was glad to note that the day had arrived at last. It was probably the first popular Conference of its kind where the experts and laymen had assembled together to work for a common cause. He emphasized the need for educating the public with regard to the basic facts about leprosy, that it was not an incurable disease and that only about 20% of the patients were infectious. It had been at his instance that service of leprous women and children had been included in the draft of the Kasturba Trust. It had surprised and horrified some.

Leprosy unlike Tuberculosis was a rural disease and should be treated in villages. There was need for more institutions, homes, hospitals and dispensaries for the patients, The governments should not rest content with giving grants and doles to the Mission for Lepers, British Empire Leprosy Relief Association etc. They should take up the work themselves in right earnest. There was a need for a large number of medical and non-medical workers to run small village leprosy centres. The organization to produce workers should be non-official, the governments encouraging and advising when necessary.

Mr. Donald Miller, General Secretary to the Mission to Lepers, thanking the convenors of the Conference for the kind reference made by them to the work of the Mission, said, "I, on behalf of the Society I represent, viz. the Mission to Lepers, can assure you of our heartiest welcome to the indigenous efforts being made for the establishment of an Indian Leprosy Organization through this important Conference, which is undoubtedly unique of its kind.

"This morning I had a talk with Shri Jajuji about the strong currents of materialism against which those with loyalty to great truths have to battle. Shri Jajuji said that if we had faith strong enough to adhere to our principles and ideals we could move mountains. And that is true. If there is but a small body at the beginning with faith enough to go forward and battle against prejudice and indifference, then there will certainly be in the end a great movement which will bring a new life and hope to those who now are so much in need of friendship and help. After I had left India in 1942 and worked in London, I was impressed with the way in which friends there would send out their help for the leprosy work in India. After a night of bombing, I would receive a contribution with the note: 'Our home was spared last night. Here is our bit for those in India who are homeless.' Or again, there were people whose houses had been bombed and who sent in their contribution for work with the note: 'Now we know what it is to be homeless, and here is our contribution for fellow-sufferers in India.' These friends would rejoice to see such a gathering as the one today. And I, on behalf of these and other friends of the Mission, convey greetings to you. Love is something international, or rather super-national; and by love shown in constructive service, this age-old problem can be solved and then the fair name of India will shine even more brightly in the years to come."

Shri Kakasaheb Kalelkar emphasized the need for providing some kind of social life for the patients besides the medical treatment and general care. He also reminded the social workers that after segregating the patient, arrangements had to be made to look after his dependents. He advocated mixed homes rather than separate ones for men and women so that they could develop a common social life. Differences of caste and creed should be ignored. The patients should form a community by themselves and evolve a religion of service, self-restraint and self-sacrifice.

As large numbers of leprosy cases gravitate to religious places as beggars, he advocated starting of leprosy homes or asylums at these religious places.

For patients who had gone beyond hope of recovery and wished to end their lives, he pleaded for euthanasia. "We offer clothing to the naked and shivering, and protection to those who are in fear. Is it not our duty to administer death to those who seek it, after all efforts at cure have failed and life has become a burden and a torture?" he said. Of course, there would be need for careful safeguards against the misuse of a truly humane provision.

Dr. Jivraj Mehta in his Presidential address dealt with the extent of the problem. Out of five million leprosy patients in the world approximately one million were in India. Of these 2,50,000 were considered to be infectious. This had to be borne in mind while considering the ways and means of segregation. While emphasizing the need for better organization of effective anti-leprosy programme, he mentioned difficulties in the way, the most important of which was a lack of accurate scientific knowledge with regard to etiology, incubation period etc. Were all infectious cases to be treated alike? How far could differentiation be made between such cases in regard to travel, participation in public affairs, even life in a common home, taking into consideration such factors as low infectivity of the disease, the prolonged and relatively close contact necessary for its transmission and relative insusceptibility of the adult? How far were the restrictions which law imposed on leprosy patients with regard to railway travel, and use of other forms of transport, justified from the point of view of public safety?

In view of the fact that leprosy is mainly a rural disease, the workers to be trained should be mainly from the villages and, in the course of training, emphasis should be laid on social service. He recommended Prof. Jagadisan's plea for balance between the older approach where emphasis was laid on the needs of the individual, influenced by the missionary spirit "inspired by compassion for the needy" and the newer approach where public health was a great factor.

Lastly, the Chairman touched the proposal for reorganization of the British Empire Leprosy Association (Indian Branch) so that the title and the constitution were more in keeping with the change of times. This was approved of by all the delegates in subsequent discussions. The Chairman also appealed to prominent social workers to take more interest in the problem and help arouse public conscience.

The papers read out at the Conference were varied and several of them were of high quality, and the discussions were free and friendly. It was emphasized that in free India, it was the duty of the Government to take up the full responsibility of leprosy work. Those representing the administration pointed out their difficulties and asked the public workers not to slacken their efforts as the Government was too preoccupied at the moment. Several useful resolutions were passed. These can be had from the office at Wardha.

The Conference closed after appointing a small committee of experts and laymen social workers, to see to the implementation of those resolutions.

New Delhi, 1-12-'47 S. N.

FOR AGENTS

Agents are requested to take note of the following:

1. Please remember that agents have to deposit with us an amount covering the price of their demand *for two months*. A month's deposit will be treated as fixed and the other as current. Every week the cost of the copies sent to them would be deducted from the current deposit.

2. The amounts for the deposits are usually sent by the agents by cheques. Please note that we do not accept cheques. The amount should be remitted either by M. O., Postal Order or by a bank draft.

MANAGER

HARIJAN

December 7 1947

NO COMPARISON POSSIBLE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

A friend asked me the other day whether I shared the opinion often expressed that as between nationalism and religion, the former was superior to the latter. I said that the two were dissimilars and that there could be no comparison between dissimilars. Each was equal to the other in its own place. No man who values his religion as also his nationalism can barter away the one for the other. Both are equally dear to him. He renders unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and unto God that which is God's. And if Caesar, forgetting his limits, oversteps them, a man of God does not transfer his loyalty to another Caesar, but knows how to deal with the usurpation. A rehearsal of this difficulty gave rise to *satyagraha.*

Take a homely illustration. Suppose I have mother, wife and daughter. All the three must be equally dear to me in their own places. It is a vulgar error to think that a man is entitled to forsake his mother and his daughter for the sake of his wife. He dare not do the converse. And if any of the three oversteps her limits, the law of *satyagraha* comes to his assistance for the restoration of the equilibrium of the three forces.

New Delhi, 28-11-'47

ITS WISE USE

(By M. K. Gandhi)

"You are as much in touch with the refugees as anyone else. Their tales of woe are heartrending. From being well-to-do a few weeks ago they are today reduced to penury. In the case of the medical profession its members have not been able to bring away any equipment; instruments and even medical books have been taken from them; personal belongings and money have had to be left behind. They are literally penniless, homeless and without occupation. They are at a loss to know what to do.

"You have often said in your post-prayer speeches that the calamity that has overtaken us is in the nature of a testing time for us. Whether we come through it victorious or defeated depends on ourselves. While one's whole heart goes out in sympathy to the refugees, it must be admitted that there is a certain amount of lack of resourcefulness in them which adds to their misery. Most doctors and *vaids* who have been deprived of lucrative practices in the various towns of Pakistan have only one demand and that is to be allotted a shop or quarters in what they consider a good locality in Delhi, or in the case of men and women who have been displaced from service, they demand re-employment by some Government. In the very nature of things only a limited number out of the thousands that have been displaced can hope to get the desired accommodation. Even if all were to get it, they could not all possibly build up a practice for themselves in one town. The persons who are not fortunate enough to get quarters consider that they have not had a fair deal. I feel that something from your pen in the nature of advice to these people would show them the right path.

"Ours is a land which needs service in every sphere. All members of all branches of the medical profession, in particular, should not find it hard to lose themselves in service if they were prepared to settle down in a small township or in some village from where they could render not only medical aid but teach people how to live cleanly and well in order to avoid disease. Personally I see no reason why all members of the medical and teaching professions should not be absorbed straightaway in Government service if Governments really mean to carry out their rural uplift programmes in practice. In the long run even private practice in the headquarters of a sub-division or in a village itself should offer more than a living wage to any man or woman willing to do without such amenities as town life has afforded them, perhaps not always for their own good. If they were efficient, honest and sympathetic they would definitely become assets to the State instead of the burden which they are today. The calamity that has befallen us would then be turned into a blessing."

This letter is from a correspondent who knows everything about this tragedy. I have not the least doubt that this tragedy can be turned to good account by the correct behaviour of the sufferers, as also that of the people amongst whom their lot is cast for the time being. In this consummation, I have no doubt that all specially qualified men and women such as doctors, lawyers, *vaids*, *hakims*, nurses, traders and bankers should make common cause with the others and lead a co-ordinated camp life in perfect co-operation, feeling not like helpless dependents on charity, but resourceful, independent men and women making light of their sufferings and looking forward to a life enriched by their sufferings, a life full of promise for the future and worthy of imitation by the people amongst whom the camp life is lived.

Then when the professional people have been inured to corporate unselfish life and when they can be spared from these camps, they would branch out into villages or otherwise, shedding the fragrance of their presence wherever they may happen to be.

New Delhi, 30-11-'47

NOTICE

Files of Volume X of the three Harijan weeklies — the *Harijan* (English), the *Harijanbandhu* (Gujarati) and the *Harijansevak* (Hindustani) of the year beginning with 10-2-'46, and ending with 26-1-'47, bound in cardboard cover and *khadi* back are available at this office.

Price *Rs.* 8-0-0 : Postage & packing *Re.* 1-0-0

MANAGER

"DO NOT LOSE HEART"

The following is from Madame Edmond Privat's letter, dated 27th August, 1947, to Gandhiji:

"Today I feel I must tell you how very deeply we have been moved by the late great events occurring to India, I mean her liberation and how we rejoiced over it.

"Yes, we know that you are not happy about it all — we read your article in the *Harijan*, but O Bapu! do not lose heart, think, O *do* think of the significance it means for us in the Occident: That India did her revolution without shedding the blood of her opponent and was liberated, is an immense progress on the past; it is a point reached in history without precedent on such a scale.

"O Bapu! For us in the Occident, just emerging from a terrific bath of blood, cannot you see how bright, luminous, divine appears to us the new dawn in India!

"Do be consoled, encouraged, braced up by our joy, our wonderful hope; you whom we regard not only as our spiritual leader, but also as an example of a man who has lived his faith fully in the daily life without losing his sense of proportion or humour. After all, is it not you who have taught us this precious message of your religion, to work with all our heart without expecting any result, leaving the rest in God's care? Well, you did what you did with all your faith and courage and now God shows us what can be achieved by non-violence as a wonderful hope, the only means for us to save our civilization from destruction. That the non-violence used was not always perfect was perhaps the case, but certainly the sincere efforts of your good people inspired by you, was there, I am convinced.

"Let us hope that we shall be worthy of this message and use it here to its full possibility.

"It is true, only a few people here understand its real meaning, but the soil is ready to receive it: 'Let us work heart within and God overhead!'

"Your article in *Harijan* of 27th July, 1947, to which I was alluding at the beginning of this letter, is going to appear, translated by Edmond in the next *Essor*. (In fact the whole number is on India.)

"I am glad for the readers of *Essor* that they should see once more this point emphasized by you and their attention drawn energetically to it, i. e. the fundamental difference between passive resistance and non-violence.

"The more I think about it the more I am convinced that people do not grasp, cannot grasp this difference. They use passive resistance and, not succeeding, they get discouraged, though yet they may be perfectly sincere in their endeavours.

"Often the fact is that people *unconsciously* lie to themselves.

"That is why lately I have been trying to get a little knowledge about psycho-analysis. Formerly one used to explain to people that one had to be aware of the great guile of Satan in his working in our heart.

"Nowadays people want more scientific methods to reach at truth and, apart from therapeutic means to cure neurosis, psycho-analysis can help normal people to get clear with the mechanisms of their feelings and attain thus a fuller consciousness which enables them, if they are sincere, to use really non-violence."

To this letter Gandhiji replied:

"I see that you have grasped the fundamental difference between passive resistance and non-violent resistance. Resistance both forms are, but you have to pay a very heavy price when your resistance is passive, in the sense of the weakness of the resister. Europe mistook the bold and brave resistance full of wisdom by Jesus of Nazareth for passive resistance, as if it was of the weak. As I read the New Testament for the first time, I detected no passivity, no weakness about Jesus as depicted in the four gospels and the meaning became clearer to me when I read Tolstoy's *Harmony of the Gospels* and his other kindred writings. Has not the West paid heavily in regarding Jesus as a Passive Resister? Christendom has been responsible for the wars which put to shame even those described in the old Testament and other records, historical or semi-historical. I know that I speak under correction for I can but claim very superficial knowledge of history — modern or ancient.

"Coming to my personal experience, whilst we undoubtedly got through passive resistance our political freedom, over which lovers of peace like you and your good husband of the West are enthusiastic, we are daily paying the heavy price for the unconscious mistake we made or better still, I made in mistaking passive resistance for non-violent resistance. Had I not made the mistake, we would have been spared the humiliating spectacle of weak brother killing his weak brother thoughtlessly and inhumanly.

"I am only hoping and praying and I want all the friends here and in other parts of the world to hope and pray with me that this blood-bath will soon end and out of that, perhaps, inevitable butchery, will rise a new and robust India — not warlike, basely imitating the West in all its hideousness, but a new India learning the best that the West has to give and becoming the hope not only of Asia and Africa, but the whole of the aching world.

"I must confess that this is hoping against hope, for, we are today swearing by the military and all that naked physical force implies. Our statesmen have for over two generations declaimed against the heavy expenditure on armaments under the British regime, but now that freedom from political serfdom has come, our military expenditure has increased and still threatens to increase and of this we are proud! There is not a voice raised against it in our legislative chambers. In spite, however, of the madness and the vain imitation of the tinsel of the West, the hope lingers in me and many others that India shall survive this death dance and occupy the moral height that should belong to her after the training, however imperfect, in non-violence for an unbroken period of thirtytwo years since 1915."

New Delhi, 29-11-'47

REVOLUTION THROUGH THE BROOM

[This article was written in September 1946, after 3 months of work as in-charge of community cleaning. It was, however, only recently polished up. — D. P.]

Gandhiji has conceived of *Nayee Talim* "as the spear-head of a silent social revolution fraught with the most far-reaching consequences." One of his mighty weapons for this revolution is the broom. We begin the day in Sevagram with half an hour of community cleaning in which almost the entire resident community of about a hundred and fifty takes part. The work ranges from the cleaning of urinals and latrines to the sweeping of roads and compounds. To the newly arrived students of the Training College it was a nasty experience to have to attend to the disposal of urine and night-soil every morning and to spoil the rarefied air of the celestial hours by clouds of dust. And then it seemed so unnecessary. There were the *bhangis* to do all this! The students would not accept, at least emotionally, the simple fact that it was their duty to clean the dirt for which they were responsible. It was not without considerable difficulty that the pangs of the birth of new social attitudes passed away, if they can be said to have done completely even now. But after three months of work we seem to be well on the road to recovery.

AUTO-ORGANIZATION

This entire corporate activity is self-directed. Though the final charge lies in the hands of a member of the staff, the students of the Training College as well as of the Basic School have their own elected ministers, whom the staff member guides and on whom the staff member throws more and more responsibility as the year proceeds and the newcomers get accustomed to our way of life.

SURVEY

Before starting, a survey of the work to be done had to be carried out. It was divided into two categories: recurring and non-recurring. The first was done every day. The second needed only occasional attention and included mostly the many 'black spots' of our locality. A stock of the equipment at our disposal was also taken.

DISTRIBUTION OF WORK

Then came the most difficult part of the job. Distribution of work among nearly 150 persons of different types and of all ages, with vast temperamental and intellectual differences, was not easy. The period under consideration was an experimental one in which certain principles were applied, tested and improved in the light of experience.

PLANNING

The following principles were observed as far as possible:

1. None should be given more work than his or her physical capacity could bear.

2. An attempt was made to see that nobody was left out. For that, it was found necessary to keep a list of the total strength of the available man-power, ready at hand. The grade of each pupil was also noted against his name. Other duties to which some people attended at the time of community cleaning were also kept in view.

3. The children were grouped together with the students of the Training College to exploit the imitative instinct of the child. It gave the Training College students an opportunity for handling children at work and thus provided them with excellent lessons in practical teaching, as Basic Education was education through work. As the Training College students were new and the children alone knew the work, they were made leaders of the various groups. The children took up their duties with confidence and 'dictated' the nature of the work to be done to the elders which appeared sometimes arrogant to them. Then a worse thing happened. The elders were, of course, lazy in the beginning. The children took their cue from them, and started coming late and neglecting their duty. They were being swamped by the newcomers. So the two have been separated, and the result has been good. Perhaps the stage of association will come a little later. A social architect has continually to feel the pulse of society and change his remedy as often as the disease dictates.

4. Inter-provincial grouping, however, could not be consciously adopted at this stage, because of certain difficulties. But still province rubbed shoulders with province. It was unfortunate that English formed the medium of conversation amongst many. But those who were free from the handicap of knowing English were forced to resort to all sorts of primitive devices, gesticulations, use of key words picked up, etc., and soon learnt the language of each other sufficient to make themselves understood. The children, not knowing English, acted as a sobering influence. The fact that a large number of English-knowing and English-speaking people — and proud of the fact too — were put under the children whose instructions they were not able to follow due to the language difficulty, provided many opportunities for amusement. Gulliver was in Lilliput.

5. Similarly we were not able to group men and women together for various reasons; and hence another opportunity of studying group activity containing different types, and of attempting to create right attitudes, was missed.

6. In grouping, first of all, the attempt was to divide the work into separately recognizable units and allot each unit of work an intelligently anticipated number of persons, varied in the light of later experience. Later, however, this method was given up and it was found that it was much more convenient and economical to divide the whole work into nearly equal groups of units and allot each group a fixed number. Then any time the duties have to be changed one has just to rotate the circle on to the next point and the duties of all the groups automatically get changed. This system of grouping and rotation had the advantage of allowing sufficient time for people in a group to develop the group spirit. A proper rotation of duties is very essential. It prevents fatigue through monotony, avails of the enthusiasm for a new venture and gives an opportunity to do and learn

all the different types of work that are there. But care should be taken to see that the period for which one's duty lasts should not be too small for him to get familiar with it.

7. It was felt that the theoretical plan should be carefully made and strictly adhered to. But in order to be able to do so it was found very necessary to make an intelligent anticipation of expected disturbances, especially from other departments. Co-ordination of the activities of various departments was found to be, as usual, the most difficult part of the job. Mostly duties used to be changed after a week. Every Thursday, therefore, we were found poring over the lists of cleaning work and kitchen work — the kitchen being the department with which our plans most often clashed. The tentative lists were then shown to the in-charge of kitchen work, the in-charge of women, the in-charge of children, and others for suggesting necessary changes.

In the theoretical plan, however, there should be an element of elasticity. For, life is changing, and as a Basic School reflects life, there must be room for change in the plan also. For this purpose man-power was divided into two parts. In one the number of men and the equipment they would require was fixed. This group performed daily recurring duties. The second was reserved for meeting the changing needs of the community. They were called the Reserve Squad. It also accommodated man-power released from elsewhere or newcomers whose names had not been included in the regular list.

8. Again here, as in any large scale organization unity of control was found to be absolutely essential. So was strict discipline. As it could only be based in our case on non-violence and self-discipline, it was a matter of slow growth.

Equipment

A word about equipment. Before starting work an intelligent anticipation of the demands of various groups was made, and sufficient equipment was collected. For, nothing is so demoralizing as lack of equipment. A list of equipment allotted to various groups pasted at the place of distribution is very helpful.

Execution

The plan having been prepared, the participants were made fully aware of it before it was put into operation. It is by no means an easy thing where such a large number of people, including children of all ages, are involved. Therefore, the attempt was always to see that lists supplying that information were carefully and plentifully exhibited in the school, the hostels and any other place of gathering.

Just before the work started the person responsible for distributing equipment went and placed the requirement of each group in front of the label bearing its name. Then everybody would come, pick up the equipment and after the work was finished put it back there to be checked by the person concerned with the collection of instruments. The question of instruments is, however, the most difficult part of the job and the manner of distribution will have to be adjusted to suit the type of persons at any place. Considerable difficulty will, however, be avoided if only the captain of each group takes and returns the equipment. Then the person responsible for distribution knows where to fix responsibility when anything is found missing or damaged.

The work having started, the assistants of the ministers for cleanliness went about watching, noting the various difficulties encountered and collecting data especially with a view to economizing man-power and equipment, without which work ceased to be educational. After a day or two the ministers and their assistants sat together to discuss things and made necessary changes in the theoretical plan, which were announced to the persons concerned. These meetings of the '*Safai* Cabinet' should be as frequent as possible to discuss matters with a view to keep up continued improvement.

Again the '*Safai* Minister' with the help of his assistants used to be on the look-out for capable, enthusiastic persons, whom he tried to put in key positions. They acted as dynamic centres to get the whole mass moving. To some extent reliable data was also collected through them.

The attempt to work out units for each kind of work that go to make it easily measurable and comparable with other types of work has not yet been made. Regular exhibition of the records of work done in terms of comparable units can also be a powerful means of indirectly stimulating those who are accustomed to work carelessly and slowly. Graphs can also be a good index of the progress of work, the change in the psychology of the pupils and their efficiency.

Assessment

Three months of community cleaning has convinced us that the broom can be a powerful means in the moulding of a new society. It was a corporate self-directed activity involving a large number of persons of both sexes, ages, temperaments and intellectual attainments — a society complete by itself and hence provided excellent lessons in democracy, group activity and organization. Again, as the society did all kinds of work by itself, including even the cleaning of its own latrines, it learnt through living, self-help and the setting right of an age-long social injustice against the Harijans. Moreover, as intelligent and educated people turned their attention to the 'dirtiest' work, whose wrong handling had been an age-long national nuisance, the methods of work improved. Many suggestions came forward for the clean and profitable disposal of nightsoil, urine, etc., though we were not able to adopt all of them. Even from the individual's selfish point of view the activity was a positive gain. By turning the attention to his immediate environment, it stimulated the spirit of minute observation and experimentation, the twin indispensable instruments for the evolution of a dynamic personality.

New Delhi, 17-11-'47

DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR

GANDHIJI'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES

Birla House, New Delhi, 24-11-'47

NEED FOR CONSTRUCTIVE WORK

You are good enough when I enter the prayer ground, to keep ample room for me and my daughters to help me to pass through you. I would urge you to observe the same orderliness when after the prayer I pass out. There is an unseemly rush to touch me as I pass out. The crowd press in upon me. I know and value your affection. I want it to take the shape not of effusiveness but of some constructive service of the country such as I have pointed out on many an occasion and in my numerous writings. The first and foremost today is communal harmony. Formerly discord was of a negative character. Today it is of a most virulent type. The Hindus and the Sikhs on the one hand and the Muslims on the other have become enemies of each other with the shameful results which we have already seen.

The attendants at the prayer should not only be free from rancour against one another, but should actively assist in re-establishing the communal harmony which was our pride during the Khilafat days. Have I not attended the huge friendly gatherings of those days? They gladdened my heart when I witnessed them. Will those days never return?

THE LATEST TRAGEDY

Take the latest tragedy that took place in the heart of the Capital City yesterday. Some Hindu and Sikh refugees are reported to have gone out to an empty Muslim house and unlawfully attempted to occupy it. A scuffle ensued and some were injured, though none fatally. This incident, bad as it was, was exaggerated out of all proportion. The first report was that four Sikhs were murdered. The sequel was to be expected. Retribution followed and several stabbings took place. A new technique seems to have been established now. The Sikhs with drawn swords, which seem to have taken the place of, little *kirpans*, with or without the Hindus, visit Muslim houses and demand evacuation. This is a monstrous state of things in this, the Capital City, if the report is true. If it is untrue, it may be dismissed. If it is true, it demands urgent attention not only from the authorities but the public as well. The former will be impotent, if the public is not behind them.

I am not sure what my duty is in this case. Things are evidently going from bad to worse. The full moon day of *Kartik* will be soon upon us. All kinds of rumours have been poured in upon me. I hope that they are all untrue, as they proved to be for the *Dussehra* and the *Bakr-Id*.

One lesson to be learnt from these rumours is that we are living a hand-to-mouth life, which is not good for any State or nation. Every servant of the nation has to consider seriously the part he has to play towards the abatement of this corroding nuisance.

KIRPAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

It is well to consider at this stage a long letter from Sardar Sant Singh of Lyallpur, former M. L. A. (Central). He has put up a forcible defence for the Sikhs. He has read into my prayer speech of last Wednesday a meaning which the words do not bear and certainly never meant by me. Perhaps the good Sardar does know my intimate connection with the Sikhs ever since my return from South Africa in 1915. There was a time when my word was law to them as to the Hindus and the Muslims. Manners have changed with the times. But I know that I have not. The Sardar, perhaps, does not view the present tendency among the Sikhs as I, their avowed, dispassionate friend without any axe of my own to grind, can and do. I speak freely and frankly because I am their true friend. I make bold to say that many a time the Sikh situation was saved because the Sikhs in general chose to follow my advice. I need, therefore, no reminder that I should be cautious about what I say about the Sikhs or any other community. Let the Sardar and every Sikh, who wishes well by them and is not carried away by the prevailing current, help in ridding the great and brave community from madness, drunkenness and all the vices that flow from it. Let them sheathe the sword which they have flourished loudly and used badly. Let them not be befooled by the Privy Council judgement if it means that the *kirpan* is a sword of any length. A *kirpan* ceases to be sacred when it goes into the hands of an unprincipled drunkard or when it is used anyhow. A sacred thing has to be used on sacred and lawful occasions. A *kirpan* is undoubtedly a symbol of strength, which adorns a possessor only if he exercises amazing restraint over himself and uses it against enormous odds against himself.

The Sardar will pardon me when I say that I have fairly studied the history of the Sikhs and drunk deep of the essence of the *Granth Saheb*. Tested by the tenets of that scripture, what is said to have been done by the Sikhs is indefensible and suicidal. The Sikh bravery and integrity must not be frittered away on any account. It can be an asset to the whole of India. In my opinion, it is a menace which it should not be.

Of course, it is nonsense to suggest that the Sikhs are enemy No. 1 of Islam. Have I not been described as such? Is the honour to be divided between them and me? I have never desired the honour. My whole life is a standing testimony against the charge. Can the same be said of the Sikhs? Let them learn the lesson from the Sikhs who stand behind the Sher-e-Kashmir. Let them repent of the follies committed in their name.

A VICIOUS SUGGESTION

I know the vicious suggestion that the Hindus would be all right if they will sacrifice the Sikhs who would never be tolerated in Pakistan. I can never be a party to any such fratricidal bargain. There can be no rest for this unhappy land unless every Hindu and Sikh returns with honour and in safety to West Punjab and every Muslim refugee to the Union, barring of course those who do not choose to do so for reasons of their own. The sin of mass exchange of population must be washed out if we are to live as peaceful and helpful neighbours.

ITS EVIL DEEDS

I must not be asked to recount the evil deeds of Pakistan. The recounting won't help either the Hindu or the Sikh sufferers. Pakistan has to bear the burden of its sins, which I know are terrible enough. It should be enough for everybody to know my opinion (in so far as it has any value) that the beginning was made by the Muslim League long before the 15th of August. Nor am I able to say that they turned over a

new leaf on the 15th of August last. This statement of my opinion can't help you. What is of moment is that we of the Union copied the sins and thus became fellow sinners: Odds became even. Shall we now awake from the trance, repent and change or must we fall ?

Birla House, New Delhi, 25-11-'47

REFUGEES OR SUFFERERS ?

In his post-prayer speech Gandhiji said that some people had objected to being called refugees. They said that the whole of India according to his own showing was equally the home of every Indian. Therefore, every one of them had the right to settle in any part of the Indian Union. They had suffered heavily in Pakistan and, therefore, they had come to the Union. They should be called sufferers. He had no objection to calling them sufferers if that was a more pleasing term. Refugee was a familier word in the English language from whose spell they were not yet disengaged. The Hindustani papers translated the word correctly as शरणार्थी (*sharanarthi*) 'Sufferers' was also an English word which his visitors had used. He suggested दुःखी (*dukhi*) as the equivalent, which the visitors accepted. This evening he wanted to talk to them about these sufferers.

NO OCCUPYING MUSLIM HOUSES

He had met three sets of people during the day. The first was a family from Lahore who had lost their all including 17 members of the family in Pakistan. They asked him to get them a house in Delhi. He told them that he was not the government and even if he was, he would not help them. There were no vacant houses in Delhi. Sufferers like them should go and live in the camps like others. They said that they were not beggars to live on charity. He replied that he would not have a single individual live on charity. Those in the camps should work for the food, shelter and clothing that they got there. They retorted that they had their children. But so had the other sufferers, replied Gandhiji. The more capable class among them should use their talents to organize the life in the camps and give the benefit of their experience and knowledge to all their fellow sufferers. These friends argued that there were many Muslims still with houses. Gandhiji felt ashamed and hurt to hear this argument. Many thousands had been forced to leave their homes. These sufferers had not been mellowed by their sufferings. But his appeal fell on deaf ears. Gandhiji then said that instead of expecting the much-injured Muslims to give up their few homes, their argument would have force if they asked him (Gandhiji) to leave his comfortable place in their favour. This seemed to silence the friends.

A REASONABLE DEMAND

After that came some Sikhs from Hazara. They did not seem to wear *kirpans*. They said that they were farmers and wanted facilities for farming. He asked them why they did not go to East Punjab. They replied that East Punjab would not take anyone else except those from West Punjab. They held that there was not enough land in East Punjab to take in those from the N. W. F. P. also. There were 8000 of these sufferers from Hazara. They had been directed to go to the Central Government. In Gandhiji's opinion, the Government should settle them on agricultural land as early as possible. The Sikh friends said that they did not wish to push out the Muslims from their homes. All they wanted was some land and ploughs, bullocks and seeds by way of loan. Then they would produce their own food. They showed willingness to go to any part of the Union where they could get agricultural land. Gandhiji thought that these sufferers were reasonable and that their reasonable wish should be gratified.

CONDITION FOR RETURN

A member of the audience had asked when they could expect to go back. He replied that they could go at once, provided they in the Union ceased to hound out the Muslims and were prepared to welcome back those who had felt compelled to migrate to Pakistan. Then he would be free to go to West Punjab and tell the Muslims there that they should welcome the Hindus and the Sikhs who had felt compelled to leave their homes in Pakistan. Today, however, he heard the foolish talk that the three and a half crores of Muslims should be turned out of the Indian Union. It seemed to him to be intolerable. He did not wish to witness that catastrophe. Sometimes he felt that he had become a futile burden on earth. But whether he was alive or dead, the sufferers would some day return to their homes.

Birla House, New Delhi, 26-11-'47

A BASELESS CHARGE

Speaking after prayers Gandhiji referred to a letter received by him from Bombay. The writer had enclosed a cutting from a Bombay newspaper and had not disclosed his name. The cutting said that the All India Radio was being used to broadcast Gandhiji's post-prayer speeches, which amounted to propaganda for the Congress. It was a Fascist technique with non-violence thrown in as a mask. The people were sick of listening to his speeches. Gandhiji's reply was that though some people might be of that opinion, there were others who wrote to him that his speeches put heart into them. The accusation was baseless. A government which used the radio for singing its own praises was worthless. The good deeds of a government alone was the right propaganda. As for himself, he only talked about things which had an intimate connection with prayer and religion. If they were not interested in his talks, they need not listen to him. He was not interested in speaking for the radio. His one object was the service of humanity and it was for that alone that he spoke to them. If the public stopped coming for prayers, he would not be making any post-prayer speeches.

ABDUCTED WOMEN

Gandhiji then referred to some letters that had hurt him deeply. Several women had been abducted in Pakistan and some of them had been cruelly molested and dishonoured. Their upbringing was such that those rescued women felt ashamed, and society also looked down upon them. To do so was cruel. While it was true that no one could touch a woman who had the purity and the *tejas* of Sita, it was hard to find a Sita in this age. At any rate, every woman could not rise to those heights. A woman who was forcibly molested had nothing to be ashamed of. She was in no way unchaste or immoral. It was strange that while immoral men or women went unpunished and the lapses of some society men and women never

came to light, people went out of their way to outcast innocent victims of brutality! Such an outlook pained him. He could never turn out or look down upon his daughter or wife if she had been subjected to such evil treatment and had escaped or been liberated. He had met such women, both Hindus and Muslims, and had told them that they had nothing to feel ashamed of.

HELPING HANDS AT HARVESTING

Gandhiji then went on to relate how the secretary of a Provincial Congress Committee, who was a farmer himself, had come to him and said that while formerly all men and women in the villages used to lend a helping hand at harvesting time, today the farmers had to hire labour for that purpose. That increased the cost of food grains and removed the spirit of free and willing co-operation, which was an asset in itself. Gandhiji knew of the good custom. He advised all, with all the emphasis at his command, to practise it.

KISAN RAJ

The secretary said also that at least the Food Minister, if not most, should be *kisans*. It was unfortunate that today none of the Ministers were *kisans*. The Sardar was born in a farmer's family and though he knew something about agriculture, he had become a barrister by profession. Their Prime Minister was a learned man, a great historian and a great writer, but he knew nothing about agriculture and farming. The other Ministers were all well-to-do men, who had never worked on the land. Yet more than 80% of India's population consisted of *kisans*. Only a *kisan* knew how to increase production and the fertility of the land. Only he could understand the whys and wherefores of profiteering by the *kisans* and overcome the evil. In democracy, the *kisan* should be the ruler. Gandhiji would certainly like to push forward an honest and capable *kisan*. Such a *kisan* would not know English. He (Gandhiji) would ask Jawaharlalji to be his (the *kisan's*) secretary and see the foreign Ambassadors on his chief's behalf and take pride in such service. Such a *kisan* Prime Minister would not ask for a palace to live in. He would live in a mud hut, sleep under the sky and work on the land during the day whenever he was free. The whole picture would change immediately. In *Panchayat Raj*, the man who should count most in India was naturally the *kisan*. How to advance him was the question.

Birla House, New Delhi, 27-11-'47

NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE

In his after-prayer speech Gandhiji told the audience that he had been to see H. E. the Governor-General and had met Liaquat Ali Saheb who was staying in the Government House. There he learnt that the Governor-General, the Prime Ministers of the two Dominions, Sardar Patel and the Finance Minister had conferred together and had come to some conclusions which might bring about peace to the strife-torn country of theirs. Nothing was impossible for sincere men in the way of bringing concord out of discord.

THE SHER-E-KASHMIR

Then Gandhiji had a visit from Sheikh Abdulla who was affectionately called Sher-e-Kashmir. Though there were just a handful of Hindus and Sikhs in Kashmir, the Sheikh Saheb took pains to carry them with him. He had been to Jummu also. What had happened there was most shameful for the Hindus and the Sikhs. But that did not make the Sheikh Saheb lose his balance. His visit to Jammu also bore good fruit. And if the harmony continued as it promised to do, it would be a lesson in communal harmony for the whole of India.

Kashmir was a mountainous country. Life there was most difficult in winter. Many routes passed through Pakistan. There was, however, a narrow strip which joined Kashmir to East Punjab. But in East Punjab it was difficult for the Muslims to safely pass through, much less to live in, as it was difficult for the Hindus and the Sikhs in the West Punjab and the N. W. F. P. How could Kashmir have trade with the Indian Union under the circumstances? If the insanity continued in East Punjab, accession to the Union might prove nugatory. He hoped that wisdom would dawn upon East Punjab. It was the duty of the Central Government to see that there was a safe land route between Kashmir and the Union, so that the woollen cloth, other manufactures and fruits from Kashmir could come to the Union as freely as before.

TERRIBLE IF TRUE

He sometimes glanced at the *Dawn* and the *Pakistan Times*. These were influential Pakistan dailies. One could not dismiss with indifference what they said. These papers had reported that the Muslims in Kathiawad were being harrassed. There was arson, loot, murders and abductions. He had received some telegrams too about the matter. Some Hindu friends had told him that arson and loot had certainly taken place in some places, but they were not aware of murders and abductions. He had asked Liaquat Saheb if the report of the Pakistan papers could be trusted. The Pakistan Premier assured him that it could be trusted about the facts, though he could not vouch for the magnitude. The report hurt Gandhiji deeply. He was born in Kathiawad. At the head of the Temporary Government in Junagadh was his nephew. The Sardar as well as Shri Shamaldas Gandhi had said in their speeches in Kathiawad that no Muslim could be hurt in Junagadh or Kathiawad, provided the Muslims were faithful to the Union. Gandhiji had been glad to hear that the Hindus and the Muslims of Junagadh seemed of their own free will to have decided to stay in the Union. If what was reported of the happenings in Kathiawad was true, then like their independence, what they had won in Junagadh was only to lose it. He fervently hoped that the reports were highly exaggerated if they were not entirely untrue. He would welcome an authoritative and frank statement on the subject. If the poison spread throughout India, life would not be worth living in it.

Birla House, New Delhi, 28-11-'47

GURU NANAK'S BIRTHDAY

Speaking after prayers Gandhiji said that that day being Guru Nanak's birthday, he had been invited to attend a meeting of the Sikhs. Baba Bachittar Singh came and insisted that he must go. Gandhiji was at first reluctant. He told Baba Saheb that the Sikhs were annoyed with him for the bitter pill they had had to swallow at his hands. Whatever he had said about them had been said out of genuine affection and fullness

of heart. Still many Sikhs had resented his words. Therefore, he did not think that his going to the meeting would serve any useful purpose. But Baba Saheb said that thousands of Sikh men, women and children, many of whom had suffered heavily in Pakistan, were anxious to hear him and he must not disappoint them. He consented. Baba Saheb went to inform the meeting and promised to return within half an hour. He brought Sheikh Abdulla Saheb with him. Gandhiji was surprised. The Sikhs and the Muslims could not bear to see each other these days. How could the Sheikh Saheb attend a Sikh meeting? But Baba Saheb said that the Sheikh Saheb had brought together the Hindus, the Sikhs and the Muslims in Kashmir and the Sikhs would like to hear him too. So Gandhiji and Sheikh Abdulla Saheb attended the meeting. Both addressed the meeting. Thousands of Sikhs listened in silence and did not in any way indicate resentment at their words. It pleased him. He had told them that it was a New Year Day for them. They should pledge themselves to make a new and clean beginning from the day. Whatever the Muslims might have done in Pakistan, they must keep their hands clean. Two wrongs did not make one right. The essence of Guru Nanak's teaching was tolerance and Hindu-Muslim unity. A friend had written to him that Guru Govind Singh had several Muslim disciples and he protected them. Though the tenth *Guru* had taken to the sword, he used it only against perpetrators of wrong and to protect the innocent and the weak. It had hurt him deeply to see not a single Muslim as he passed through Chandani Chowk. It was a shame for the Hindus and the Sikhs in Delhi that the Muslims should feel terror-struck.

No Communalism in Commerce

Gandhiji then referred to a letter from the Muslim Chamber of Commerce at Calcutta. The secretary complained that the Central Government had decided to withdraw recognition from the Muslim Chamber. The complaint would be proper if the Muslim Chamber was the exception. But he would justify the step if recognition was withdrawn, say, from the European, and the Marwadi Chambers of Commerce and such others. Surely, in a secular State there was no room for separate communal organizations except for internal reform. The European Chamber had undue recognition from the late foreign Government. Its annual function was a great event. The Viceroys used to make serious pronouncements. He hoped that no such importance would be given to the body. He would expect the great European Houses to make common cause with the indigenous population and seek their advancement in common with that of the whole of India. He advised them to take the lead in disbanding their separate Chamber. The Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Christians, the Parsis, the Jews should be Indians first and Indians last. Religion was the personal affair of each individual. It must not be mixed up with politics or national affairs.

Renovation of the Somnath Temple

Gandhiji then came to a letter of a Christian in a newspaper holding that the temple of Somnath could not undergo renovation from State funds. He sympathized with the objection. The Sardar happened to be with him. He was shown the cutting and he said that not a pie would be spent from the Junagadh State funds or for that matter from the Central fund for such purposes. The temple of Somnath would be renovated from funds donated by the Hindus and others who may be interested in the renovation. The Indian Union was a secular State and not a religious one. Shri Shamaldas Gandhi who was at the head of the provisional government for Junagadh had promised to give fifty thousand rupees from the public fund collected by him and His Highness the Jam Saheb had promised to pay one lakh.

No Premium on Evil

Many Hindu and Sikh girls had been abducted by Muslim *goondas*. Some people had told him that in some places *goondas* were demanding money as ransom. He could never tolerate the giving of premiums upon vice which he considered to be abduction. He would, therefore, advise fathers and husbands never to give way to temptation. He would trust the Pakistan Government to rescue the abducted girls as he would expect the Union Government to do likewise in respect of the Muslim girls abducted by Hindus and Sikhs.

Kathiawad Quiet

Lastly, he had told them last evening what he had read about the happenings in Kathiawad against Muslims. He asked the Sardar whether he knew anything about loot, arson, murders and abductions. The Sardar said that some looting and arson had taken place before he went there and assured loyal Muslims of safety. Looting and arson were quickly suppressed. Murder of Muslims as such and abduction of Muslim girls had not taken place to his knowledge. In fact Congressmen, he added, had risked their own lives in saving Muslim life and property. Gandhiji was glad of the repudiation. He would ask his informants to correct themselves publicly. It did not behove newspapers to publish unverified statements. If, however, the Sardar was in darkness, he would like authentic confirmation of the serious charges made.

Birla House, New Delhi, 29-11-'47

Liquor in Delhi

In his after-prayer speech Gandhiji said that he had heard and read in newspapers that the consumption of liquor in Delhi had gone up tremendously. Liquor brought many vices in its wake. If the Sikhs had really turned a new leaf from yesterday, the liquor consumption should become even less than before.

Damage to Mosques

Many mosques had been damaged during the riots. Some had been converted into temples. The idols should be removed without the intervention of the police or the military. These things could take place only if there was real contrition. He knew that the idols could not be placed in the mosques by the Sikhs. What, however, he did say was that reformation among the Sikhs would automatically affect the Hindus in the right direction. In the present instance the Hindus and the Sikhs had worked hand in hand.

Abducted Girls

As to the abducted girls, Gandhiji said that a large number of Hindu and Sikh girls had been abducted in Pakistan. God alone knew what awful things they were being subjected to. The Hindus and the Sikhs in the Union had not behaved

better. He had learnt that the Muslim girls who were abducted were subjected to unnamable ill-treatment by their lustful captors. He would like the East Punjab Government and its officers to deliver every one of such girls from indecent captivity. Every abduction or capture should be regarded by both the Governments as illegal and *ab initio* void. It was the peremptory duty of the two Governments not to rest till every such girl was freed from captivity and returned to the respective Governments. There could be no question of voluntary conversion or association on the part of the girl concerned.

CONTROLS

Dealing with controls Gandhiji said that it was good that the control on sugar had been removed. It was now up to the factory-owners and the dealers to see that there was no rise in prices because of the removal of the control. He would understand a rise in prices owing to a rise in the price of sugarcane and a corresponding rise in the price of sugar. But in no case should the rise be due to the greed of the factory-owners and dealers. The factory-owners should combine so as to prevent any rise in the price of sugar except for the rise in the price of sugarcane. Honest behaviour in the case of sugar would accelerate the removal of the control on foodstuffs and cloth. The speaker mentioned that *gur* was any day superior to sugar. It was prepared in the villages. This should always be cheaper than sugar and easily available.

TAX LUXURY ARTICLES

A friend had written to him complaining of the increase in the third class railway fares. He said that it were better if an additional tax was put upon articles of luxury such as tobacco, cigars, cigarettes etc. The suggestion appealed to him. But not having studied the subject as fully as was necessary, he was unable to give a definite opinion. He merely mentioned the suggestion so as to draw the attention of the authorities concerned. He knew that our Ministers had to be chary of spending a single pice without a just cause. One good test was whether what the villagers gave to the State the State returned to them manifold in the shape of manifold services they needed and whether what was spent could be proved to be on their behalf.

VOLUNTARY HOME GUARDS

A free India need not keep a huge standing army. Voluntary home guards would protect their homes and contribute to the defence of the country.

Birla House, New Delhi, 30-11-'47

CARRY AN ASANA

Referring to the cold stones and the cold ground on which the audience was sitting, Gandhiji suggested that they should all carry an old newspaper or some other kind of *asana* wherever they went. That used to be a common custom in the olden days, though it had been given up in modern times. It was a useful custom. Although he did not want people to become delicate, he felt that sitting on the cold floor in wintry weather was unnecessary and not good for women in particular.

TELEGRAM FROM KATHIAWAD

Next, Gandhiji referred to several telegrams that he had received about Kathiawad. He had spoken to them of the reported happenings in Kathiawad. He could not ignore what was written in the Pakistan newspapers. Thousands of people read and believed those newspapers. Therefore, he had spoken to them without waiting for verification of the reports. If the reports were incorrect, it was a matter of shame for the newspapers concerned. If they were true, it was shameful for the people of Kathiawad. He had told them what the Sardar had said. He had seen Gandhiji today also and repeated his assurance that things were all right in Kathiawad. Gandhiji had also received a telegram from Rajkot which said that some Hindus had lost their balance at one stage and had damaged or burnt a few Muslim houses, but Congressmen aided by the State had immediately controlled the situation at the risk of their own lives. Shri Dhebarbhai who was a well-known lawyer and leader in Rajkot had been mobbed. Some Congressmen had been injured. Thus, though the mob fury was turned against Congressmen, the Muslims were saved. They were sorry to learn of Gandhiji's distress and wanted to reassure him that life was normal in Rajkot. They were making enquiries about other places and would let him know the result. It was the Rashtriya Sevak Sangh and the Hindu Mahasabha who were supposed to have planned the attack, but they had failed. There was another telegram from the Muslims offering thanks for the services rendered to them by the Congressmen. A telegram from some Muslims in Bombay complimented the speaker for having brought out the matter and added that the Muslims in Kathiawad were looted and terrorized. Thank God, there was no mention of murders and abductions. It said that many Muslims had left Kathiawad. If the assurances given were to be relied upon, the evacuees should return to their homes. Gandhiji warned men and newspapers against making unverified or exaggerated statements. It would serve no useful purpose to deceive their friends. He had received too a reassuring wire from the Maharaja of Bhavnagar. There was also a wire from five Muslims of Rajkot saying that thirteen shops were looted resulting in a damage of less than one lakh and saying that the State and the Congressmen had brought the situation under control. Against this was a telegram from Junagadh just received as he was coming to the prayer. It confirmed the alarming news that he had mentioned on Friday and asked for an inquiry. The inquiry was not in his power to give. As the meeting knew, he was awaiting further telegrams from Kathiawad. He could say, however, that he would not be satisfied except with full assurances which was perhaps better than an official inquiry.

APPEAL TO HINDU MAHASABHA AND THE R. S. S.

Gandhiji appealed to the Hindu Mahasabha and the Rashtriya Sevak Sangh, both of which were Hindu organizations and had many well-educated men on their roles, to desist from what they were reported to be doing. Religion could not be saved by questionable methods. They should let the Government right wrongs and punish evil-doers.

IDOLS IN MOSQUES

Gandhiji then referred to a communique in the Press giving seven days' notice for the removal of idols from the mosques which had been converted into temples. If there was no compliance, the police were to remove the idols. The Sardar had said that the Government would

repair the damage done to mosques. In Gandhiji's opinion, it was the duty of the public to do so. An idol had no value unless it was duly installed in a consecrated place by duly qualified devotees. Forcible possession of a mosque disgraced Hinduism and Sikhism. It was the duty of the Hindus to remove the idols from the mosques and repair the damage. He had not heard of any mosque being turned into a *gurudwara*. The Sikhs worshipped the *Guru Granth Saheb*. It would be an insult to the *Granth Saheb* if it was placed in a mosque.

A Muslim had brought to him a half-burnt *Quran*. He had wrapped it up in a piece of cloth, showed it to him with tearful eyes and went away without speaking. The man who had thus tried to insult the *Quran* had insulted his own religion. He appealed to the Hindus and the Sikhs to desist from bringing ruin to their country and religion.

'FARMING FOR DISEASE'

[The following is taken from *Farming and Gardening for Health or Disease*, a lecture by Sir Albert Howard, published by Leeds Vegetarian Society. V. G. D.]

Under repeated dressings of artificials the soil gradually loses its texture and refuses to drain; the crops soon fall a prey to insect, fungous and virus diseases. These have to be kept in check by a regular galaxy of poison sprays. Our dairy herds suffer more and more from such diseases as foot-and-mouth, tuberculosis, mastitis, contagious abortion, and so forth. The maladies of mankind increase in intensity: the hospitals fill up with patients: lunatic asylums are overcrowded: more and more money has to be devoted to medical care. . . .

If we put to the earth itself the question, — what is your verdict on the war in the soil: on this controversy between inorganic and organic farming. . . ? — we shall very quickly obtain an answer. This reply must then be interpreted. For this we must make the fullest use of our best experts who are quite convinced that such produce is not worth eating. Their verdict is deliberate, final and crushing.

Such expert testimony is easily obtained. Take any average permanent pasture, under the turf of which humus is constantly being made by natural agencies. Divide it fairly into three equal strips; manure the middle plot with a conventional dressing of mixed artificials containing sulphate of ammonia; treat the two outside plots with an equivalent amount of freshly prepared compost made from animal and vegetable wastes. We shall then have a comparison between humus supplemented by chemical manures and humus alone.

Everything will soon be ready for the verdict of our best experts on nutrition, — not statistically minded bipeds as we might at first expect, but quadrupeds in the shape of the grazing animal. The livestock will concentrate on the two humus areas and graze the herbage down to the roots: they will only lightly pick over the produce of the poisoned soil.

That the middle strip has indeed been poisoned will be evident from the response of our chief soil conditioner and humus distributor — the lowly earthworm. These creatures will leave the plot treated with sulphate of ammonia, but will multiply in the two humus-filled areas. This can be determined by a simple examination of the upturned turves, or better still, by counting the molehills on the three plots. Earthworms, as is wellknown, provide a part of the food of the mole. Often, when these animals pass from one of these humus plots to the other, they go straight across the artificially manured area and seem to know by instinct that they are not in one of their usual feeding grounds. Consequently many fewer molehills are to be found on this strip.

A few words are needed at this point to emphasize the importance of the earthworm in providing our crops with food. The casts of the earthworm are 50% richer in humus, five times richer in available nitrogen, seven times richer in soluble phosphate, and eleven times richer in replaceable potash than the upper soil. It is little wonder therefore that the roots of the crops like the potato are always attracted to worm casts and penetrate them in all directions. The weight of such worm casts per acre per annum may run to 25 tons in land in good heart.

The much vaunted and much advertized chemicals therefore stand condemned. Our livestock despise the resulting produce: the earthworm goes on strike. Why therefore pursue this subject any further and spend time on what has been described as the statistical elaboration of the obsolete? The present methods of farming are harmful, as is obvious from the general standard of health in this country compared with that of the peoples who are fed on the produce of humus-filled soil. In the nutrition of our population at least two mistakes are made: the food is grown for the most part on poisoned soil; it is afterwards refined, processed and preserved in various ways. Both these factors cause untold mischief.

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STORY HOUR

(*Continued from Vol. XI, No. 26, p. 250*)

[This is from Jami's *Baharistan*, edited by Prof. A. Moulvi (Educational Publishing Co., Karachi). V. G. D.]

XXXIV

Ibrahim bin Suleman says: "When the Khilafat passed from Bani-Ummiyah to Ban-il-Abbas, and the latter were seizing and killing the former, I was sitting outside Kufah on the terrace of a palace which overlooked a desert. Black flags arrived from Kufah, and I thought that the party carrying those flags had come in search of me. I knew no one who could hide and save me from the enemy, but I came to the gate of a big palace, where I saw a young man of prepossessing appearance on horseback surrounded by a number of his attendants. I approached him and saluted him.

'Who are you, and what do you want?' he asked.

'I am a fugitive,' I replied, 'and being pursued by the enemy, I seek shelter in your house.'

The handsome youth took me to his house, and seated me in a room adjoining the women's apartments. I lived with him for a few days and had a very fine time. I got whatever food and clothes I liked, and my host never pestered me with questions.

I then noticed that he went out for a ride every day and came back. I therefore said to him, 'Every day I see you go out and return soon afterwards. What is it that you are after?'

'Ibrahim bin Suleman has killed my father,' he replied. 'I hear that he is hiding himself in this city. I go out every day in the hope that I might find him out and wreak vengeance upon him.'

When I heard this I was astonished at my misfortune. Fate had placed me in the hands of the very man that was in search of me in order to kill me. I gave up all hope of saving myself. I said, 'O generous man, I owe you a debt which I can never hope to repay. I must therefore show you your enemy and relieve you of your anxiety on that score. I am Ibrahim bin Suleman. Despose of me just as you will.'

But my host would not believe that I was Ibrahim and said, 'You are fed up with life and wish to put yourself out of misery.'

'No,' said I. 'I swear by Allah that I have killed your father.'

I gave him some clues, and at last he was convinced that I was speaking the truth. His colour changed, his eyes became red, and hanging down his head for a time, he said, 'You will soon die and meet my father in the other world, where he will settle his account with you. I cannot injure you as you have placed yourself under my protection. Go away at once lest I should lose my self-control and do you harm.' So saying he gave me a thousand dinars. I took the money and bade farewell to my host whose generosity was perhaps without a parallel in human history."

Do good to him who does you harm; for in harming you he has only harmed himself.

AIR TRAVEL OR TRANSPORT?

As days go on it seems travelling by air is becoming more and more common amongst at least the rich. All manner of means are being used to popularize and extend this service. Hence it becomes necessary for us to study the place of Air Travel in society.

The phrase 'a much travelled man' connotes generally the significance of travelling. We expect such a person to have come in contact with all sorts and conditions of men and things, and, therefore, through his intelligent approach to other people's lives we expect such a person to be broad-minded, well-informed and cultured. Travelling, therefore, has various advantages attached to it. In ancient times the pilgrimages in India were based on such cultural aspect of travel though they were given a religious colouring.

A traveller at different stages comes in contact with different types of men. He enters into conversation with them, finds out what they are thinking, what their customs and traditions are and compares them with the conditions prevailing at home. This, ultimately, leads to cultural development. We encourage, therefore, our children to read books of travel which means educating them and giving them information in regard to our fellowmen. If we look upon travel from this point of view, the phrase 'Air Travel' is a misnomer. All that air travel stands for today is pure and simple transport. A person is at one place at one moment and availing himself of the air service he is at another place the next moment. A passenger may be at Karachi in the early morning and in London the same day late at night with nothing added to him either in the form of information, culture or contacts. This is just as much simple transport as in the case of merchandise, say, a bale of cotton!

It may be argued that time is thereby saved. Does this mean that man's life has been added to? No, it only means that the man has transferred to himself another slice of his life to spend it on his own business from spending it on cultural pursuit. When we send a boy of school-going age to look after herds in the jungle are we saving time? We are only depriving the boy of his share of culture. Life does not consist in spending our time all the time in our own business. Man has to expand himself and come into contact with fellowmen as long as he wishes to remain a social being. Air transport, therefore, reduces a man from being a social being into a mere individual. It enlarges, you may say, self-centredness. Time saved, therefore, signifies transference of time from cultural pursuits to self-centred occupations. This can hardly be looked upon as an advantage when we take life to mean the richness in which it is lived in the cultural sense and not in the material sense. To put it in another way, one may say that it elongates the

animal life and shortens the human aspect of it. This is the basis of solitary confinement. While travelling by air, the deafening noise of the propellers and the limited accommodation makes it almost impossible to carry on any conversation with the fellow passengers. It is equivalent to the person being asked to sit in a chair in a drawing-room with all the windows shut continuously for the duration of the voyage. However comfortable the chair may be, the boredom becomes unbearable. One cannot look around because not only is the window space limited but also nothing can be seen with the naked eye. The long distance planes travel 15 to 18 thousand feet above the ground. That means you can see objects at a distance of about three miles. Very often, therefore, one sees a misty blue below and a deep blue above and rarely can one recognize trees or even buildings excepting at the approach of the landing places. With the mind shut and the eyes dim and the ears deafened, the traveller sits for hours together night or day, and leaves the plane with an aching back, glad that his destination has been reached. This is "modern travel"!

As regards food, packets of victuals are provided at the meal hours. As yet India has not received recognition in the catering line. Whether the person is a vegetarian or not, the packets are filled with cold non-vegetarian food! It is with much difficulty that one could procure an additional slice of bread and butter to meet one's needs. (It may be here suggested that it should be required of our Air Lines calling at Indian air-ports to cater for pure vegetarians also).

One of the pleasures in fast travels, such as by motor car on the road or by train on the rails, is a sense of speed that man seems to crave for. The mere worm of man dashing through the air at 40, 50 or 60 miles per hour gets an exhilaration of doing that which he cannot physically perform. Even this joy is denied in air travel. Being so high up, even though the plane may be going at 300 miles per hour, one just sees the ground underneath passing away like gentle, idle clouds at a snail-slow speed. Hence, even this human desire for quick motion remains unsatisfied.

If we look at the technical part of this mode of travel, we notice that it consumes tremendous quantities of petroleum. This fuel is in limited supply as it is taken out from the bowels of the earth from various parts of the world. As the stock gets less and less, the consumers' desire to obtain control over other reservoirs becomes greater and greater. This ultimately leads to greed, jealousy, hatred and suspicion, culminating in global wars. Therefore, an undue increase in this method of travel conduces towards developing an unhealthy relationship with our neighbours.

All this does not mean that there should be no air travel at all; but it only indicates its shortcomings and warns us that we should use it with the utmost caution. The so-called time-saving is not in itself sufficient compensation to make up for the various disadvantages connected with it. The more accurate way of calling it, as we have suggested, would be "air transport" and that would probably convey what it stands for more accurately. In these days, what man needs most is relaxation. Air transport only adds to the pressure on life.

J. C. KUMARAPPA

'GIVE ME A MUD HOUSE'

[I wonder if our housing schemers and civil engineers may not derive a hint or two from the following article by Grace Vernon condensed from *Liberty* (New York) in *International Digest* of July 1947. —V. G. D.]

You may have your houses of stone and brick, concrete and wood. For fun in the building, for resistance to heat and cold, water and wind and termites, and for low price, give me a house of mud.

Such a house is handsome, remarkably well insulated and guaranteed to outwear the builder. The other day in California I had dinner in a mud house built 75 years ago and still in good condition. Conversely it is the only type of house I know that can be razed free of charge without resorting to fire. When you tire of the floor plan or weary of the view and wish to rebuild, you simply remove the roof, wait for the rains and let your house quietly and rapidly dissolve.

I built one in South India. . . .

When I sat down and listed our requirements I felt really alarmed. In our part of the hills, — 8,000 feet above sea-level and close to the equator, — a house must withstand temperatures ranging from 140° to below freezing point. Often the thermometer would shift as much as 100° in 24 hours. Then there were the monsoon winds — great gales. There would be armies of termites capable of eating a table in a single night.

There was only one answer to my problem, my friends told me: a mud house with walls two feet thick and a tile roof. There was a contractor in a village nearby and I had better send him a message at once . . .

The tall handsome white-draped Indian who called on me looked more like a local king than a contractor. He bowed politely, seated himself cross-legged on the floor and asked the conventional questions: my age, how many children I had, the state of my health etc. Only in leaving did he mention my house. Building it, he assured me, would be one of the high moments of his life and mine . . . .

A few days later he sent his . . . estimate: a four-room house with spacious rooms, wide verandahs and a complete tile roof would cost the equivalent of $ 500 in American money. I agreed.

Nothing happened for a week. Then one morning an old man with a can full of white sand arrived. Holding sand in his fingers and letting it drop on the ground, he paced off the out-lines of my house. That same day the building materials arrived. One

load of eucalyptus poles, another of lime and sand — that was all. And the next morning the workers came.

At first I did not recognize them. The motley crowd of both sexes and all ages seemed more like an invasion of picnickers. It developed that the contractor had brought his whole village with him. And everyone, except children under five, had a job and did it.

The grandmothers cared for the babies. The men dug a deep hole, which the women filled with water. The women dug clay and carried it on their heads to the hole. The small boys stripped, jumped into the hole and mixed the clay and water into mud. The little girls were detailed to sit on a slight rise of ground and watch for rain. The grandfathers kept the goats out of my tea fields. A guard was put over the contractor's whole precious supply of nails which barely filled a medium-sized tin can.

When the above mixture reached the proper consistency, the women began moulding bricks, while the little boys, now covered with mud went on to preparing the ground for the laying of the cement floor. This they did by trampling the moistened earth smooth. While the men mixed the cement, little girls (save one left to keep an eye on the weather) carried the newly made bricks, one at a time, and piled them carefully in the hot sun. A little later a bullock-cart came, loaded with tiles which the boys unloaded. Meanwhile the men were spreading the cement for the floor. When this was done, all went home. The first day's work was over.

There was an interval of some days for the bricks to dry and for the village to have a feast. Sounds of violins and flutes floated up the hillside all day and all night. The bricks achieved a rock-like hardness. Then work began again.

Building was a community affair. The women spread the mortar, the children carried the bricks and the men set them in place. The walls rose with astonishing speed. And then just as the walls were nearly high enough, there was a single high-wailing cry from the little sky-watcher. A few white clouds were sailing lightly towards us.

To me a shower meant that my house, yet unprotected by a roof or waterproof coating, would melt away. But my fears were soon dispelled. Helped by the men, all the small boys clambered to the top of the walls. There they lay flat, close together, spreading out their cotton garments. While the rest of the crowd took shelter, the boys protected these walls with their bodies. When the shower was over, my house still stood.

The only wood in the house, except window frames and doors, went into the roof. It was supported entirely by the mud walls. Now that the rafters were being laid, it was time to dole out the precious nails. Soon the bright red roof had been laid. A carpenter framed the doors and windows, and when the whole structure was coated with white plaster, it was in my possessive eyes a beautiful little bungalow . . . .

A week later I heard music and stepped out on the verandah to see a procession approaching. First came a boy playing on a flute. After him came the carpenter, carrying a lime on a stick. Then came a boy bearing a large decorated cake. And last of all came a porter carrying a brass tray on which lay an envelope. The lime was for good luck and the envelope contained the bill. . . . .

My house has taken without complaint a lot of weather and a lot of living, and it has steadily discouraged the termites. They tell me it will probably stand for 100 years. Yes, you may have wood and brick and steel. But give me mud.

What Saddens the Heart

He was supposed to be the wisest of men who wrote of "Wine that maketh glad the heart of man." One wonders whether he was wise. The drink habit is becoming a veritable menace in Delhi according to a friend who complains that it is difficult for girls to walk out in the streets of Old Delhi at night because of the fear of meeting drunken persons. If this is true, it is a sad commentary on the citizens of Delhi.

The Congress Government stands for prohibition and none of the Cabinet Ministers offers wine to guests at parties. This good example is not followed by members of the services and cocktail parties still hold the field. It is sad to see young people indulging in wine which is neither good for the body nor for the mind. Only recently some women, wives of the labouring classes, have complained of how their husbands spend their earnings in drink leaving little for domestic expenses. If people in high places do not set the proper example, who is to do it? And as usual it is the women who suffer and are sad at heart.

New Delhi, 30-11-'47 X. Y. Z.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
GANDHIJI'S ADDRESS TO SIKHS ON GURU NANAK'S BIRTHDAY		449
ALL INDIA LEPROSY WORKERS CONFERENCE	... S. N.	450
NO COMPARISON POSSIBLE	... M. K. GANDHI	452
ITS WISE USE	... M. K. GANDHI	452
"DO NOT LOSE HEART"	... M. K. GANDHI	453
REVOLUTION THROUGH THE BROOM	DEV PRAKASH NAYYAR	454
GANDHIJI'S POST-PRAYER SPEECHES		456
'FARMING FOR DISEASE'	... V. G. D.	461
STORY HOUR	... V. G. D.	462
AIR TRAVEL OR TRANSPORT?	J. C. KUMARAPPA	462
'GIVE ME A MUD HOUSE'	... V. G. D.	463
NOTE: WHAT SADDENS THE HEART	... X. Y. Z.	464

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